

Creation Compromises

CREATION VS. EVOLUTION

A shattering critique of the PBS/NOVA television series 'Evolution'
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The big picture

by Ken Ham

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The world's press was watching and listening in 1925 when, at the famous Scopes Trial¹ in Dayton, Tennessee, William Jennings Bryan (seen as the man representing Christianity) was cross-examined about his faith.

Part of the dialogue went as follows:

Clarence Darrow (the ACLU lawyer): 'Mr Bryan, could you tell me how old the Earth is?'

Bryan: 'No, sir, I couldn't.'

D: 'Could you come anywhere near it?'

B: 'I wouldn't attempt to. I could possibly come as near as the scientists do, but I had rather be more accurate before I give a guess.' ...

D: 'Does the statement, "The morning and the evening were the first day," and "The morning and the evening were the second day," mean anything to you?'

B: 'I do not think it necessarily means a twenty-four-hour day.'

D: 'You do not?'

B: 'No.' ...

D: 'Then, when the Bible said, for instance, "and God called the firmament heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day," that does not necessarily mean twenty-four-hours?'

B: 'I do not think it necessarily does.' ... 'I think it would be just as easy for the kind of God we believe in to make the Earth in six days as in six years or in six million years or in 600 million years. I do not think it important whether we believe one or the other.'

D: 'And they had the evening and the morning before that time for three days or three periods. All right, that settles it. Now, if you call those periods, they may have been a very long time.'

B: 'They might have been.'

D: 'The creation might have been going on for a very long time?'

B: 'It might have continued for millions of years.'

Right there, I believe, Darrow knew he had 'won' the trial in the public mind! As a humanist, Darrow knew that the language of Genesis 1 was clear, and taught that God created in six literal days. But

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he knew that if he could show the world that Christians really didn't believe the Bible like they purported to, he could persuade many that Christianity was a bankrupt belief—which is what he really set out to do in this trial anyway.

He enabled the world to see that the man who represented Christians didn't really believe the Bible as written in Genesis, and admitted that one could trust the scientists in regard to the Earth being millions of years old. I'm sure Bryan would be horrified to realize that what he unwittingly told the world was: 'It doesn't matter what God said He did. We can reinterpret the Bible on the basis of extra-Biblical information, so what the Word of God actually says is not important.'

This was a turning point in Christendom, and the Christian influence in our culture has declined ever since. Bryan unlocked a door—on behalf of Christians, he 'told' the secular world that Christians really didn't take the Bible as seriously as they claimed. This seriously weakened the authority of the Bible in the eyes of the public.

So it is not surprising that today's church leaders not only question the *days of Creation*, like Bryan, but increasing numbers of them have gone on to disbelieving in the *bodily Resurrection* or the *Virginal Conception* of Christ, and no longer affirming marriage as heterosexual-only.

UNIMPORTANT?

A minister of the Gospel told me recently:

'Whether or not the six days of Creation are literal twenty-four-hour periods, or long ages of millions of years is not important. After all, this is not a crucial issue like the Resurrection, where Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:14, "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." Therefore, there can be latitude on the six-day issue, but certainly not in regard to the Resurrection. Not only that, but if someone believes in billions of years instead of six literal days, this does not affect their salvation—whereas, if one does not believe in the literal, bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ, this does affect one's salvation.'

Before discussing this, consider the 'big picture'. Before World War II, around 40% or more of the population of England attended church. However, an independent UK news source recently published statistics for all denominations, showing that in the last ten years only 7.5% of the population went to church. They predicted that at the present rate of decline the church would be 'dead and buried within 40 years', with only 0.5% of the population attending services.

Though people may argue about statistics, there is certainly very little of Biblical Christianity remaining in English public life. Many church buildings have been turned into offices, shopping centres and the like.

The once-pervasive Christian influence throughout the American culture has greatly waned as well. It could be said of the USA that Christians are 'losing the culture'. Many other countries once influenced by the Christian worldview are also losing or have lost most of this Christian thinking.

So how does this decline of Christianity relate to the six days of Creation? In 1 Corinthians 15:3–4, we read:

'For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.'

The reason we know that Jesus Christ died and rose is because of what is written in the Bible—the authority of the Word of God. The plain words of Scripture are taken in context, according to the type of language and literature in which they are written, as a reader of that time and



culture would have understood it. This is called the ‘grammatical/historical’ approach to hermeneutics (interpretation of Scripture).

We certainly don’t ultimately accept the Resurrection from the scientific evidence—we didn’t see Jesus rise from the dead (we only have historical records). If we had to trust modern science, we wouldn’t believe in the Resurrection at all, as the scientific establishment would reject the claim that a human being could be resurrected from the dead.

Previous articles have featured many quotes from theologians and other Christians who don’t accept the days of Creation as ordinary days, but who admit that when the language in Genesis is taken in a straightforward way, the text clearly states that God created in six ordinary (24-hour) days. The reason these people don’t accept this is because of outside (extra-Biblical) considerations—the alleged old age (billions of years) of the Earth. For instance, the late Dr James Montgomery Boice stated in his commentary on Genesis:

*‘We have to admit here [concerning those who take the six days of Creation as literal days] that the exegetical basis [the arguments from the words of Scripture] of the creationists is strong. ... In spite of the careful Biblical and scientific research that has accumulated in support of the creationists’ view, there are problems that make the theory wrong to most (including many evangelical) scientists. ... **Data from various disciplines point to a very old earth and even older universe.**’ (emphasis added).*

B.B. Warfield and also Charles Hodge, both from the early days of Princeton Seminary (New Jersey, USA), adopted the billions-of-years belief concerning the age of the Earth, and reinterpreted Genesis 1 accordingly. Hodge went on to say in regard to a discussion on Genesis 1 and the days of Creation:

‘The Church has been forced more than once to alter her interpretation of the Bible to accommodate the discoveries of science. But this has been done without doing any violence to the Scriptures or in any degree impairing their authority.’

One wonders if Hodge would still say the same thing if he were to see this very pagan institution (Princeton University) today—for instance, its hiring of pro-infanticide, pro-euthanasia philosopher Peter Singer. Of course, there were other influences at Princeton, but one needs to understand the ‘big picture’ of why a college like this loses its Christian foundation.

Even though Hodge and Warfield were Christian ‘greats’—and even though much of their teaching was Biblically sound—sadly, they helped ‘unlock a door’—the door of compromise—the door to help begin the undermining of Biblical authority. Once Christians concede to the world that we don’t have to take **the words in Genesis** as written, but can use outside beliefs (e.g. age of Earth) to (re)interpret Scripture—then the door to do this **throughout the whole of Scripture** has been unlocked. Once this door is unlocked, subsequent generations push it open even further.

There are a number of instances throughout the Bible where one sees compromise in one generation, and in the next, the compromise is usually much greater. It doesn’t take long before the godly foundation once there is eroded (e.g. the kings of Israel; and in light of Exodus 20:4–6 concerning idolatry, consider 2 Kings 14–16).

STILL SAVED, BUT ...

Now it is true that whether one believes in six literal days or not doesn’t ultimately affect one’s salvation, if one is truly born again. However, we need to stand back and look at the ‘big picture.’ In many nations, the Word of God was once widely respected and taken seriously. But once the door of compromise has been unlocked, once Christian leaders concede that we shouldn’t take the Bible as written in Genesis, why should the world take heed of it in any area? Because the church has told the world that one can use man’s interpretation of the world (such as billions of years) to

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reinterpret the Bible, it is seen as an outdated, scientifically incorrect 'holy book', not intended to be taken as written.

As each subsequent generation has pushed this door of compromise open further and further—increasingly, they are not accepting the morality or salvation of the Bible either. After all, if the history in Genesis is not correct as written, how can one be sure the rest can be taken as written? Jesus said, 'If I have told you Earthly things, and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?' (John 3:12).

It would not be exaggerating today to claim that the majority of Christian leaders and lay people within the church do not believe in six literal days—like Bryan, they have been influenced by the world to not take the Bible as written. Sadly, being influenced by the world has led to the church no longer influencing the world.

The collapse of Christianity in the once 'Christian' West is directly related to the issue of Biblical authority—which is directly related to the issue of the days of Creation.

The battle is not one of young Earth vs old Earth, or billions of years vs six days, or creation vs evolution—the real battle is the authority of the Word of God vs man's fallible theories.

Those in the Church who do not accept God's Word as written concerning the literal days of Creation have greatly contributed to the Christian demise of the culture, and will be held responsible before the Lord for leading so many lives astray. They have undermined the **text** of Scripture because they didn't accept the **words** as written.

Why do Christians believe in the bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ? Because of the **words of Scripture** ('according to the Scriptures').

And why should Christians believe in the six literal days of Creation? Because of the **words of Scripture** ('In six days the Lord made ...').


The real issue is one of authority—is God's Word the authority, or is man's word the authority? How the church answers this question will determine the future of the nations of the world.

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The god of an old Earth Does the Bible teach that disease, bloodshed, violence and pain have always been ‘part of life’?

by Ken Ham

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The late Carl Sagan, in his book *Contact*, wrote:

If God is omnipotent and omniscient, why didn't he start the universe out in the first place so it would come out the way he wants? Why is he constantly repairing and complaining? No, there's one thing the Bible makes clear: The Biblical God is a sloppy manufacturer. He's not good at design, he's not good at execution. He'd be out of business if there was any competition.¹

It's easy to understand why Carl Sagan viewed the God of the Bible this way. Sagan believed that the fossil record, with all its death, mutations, disease, suffering, bloodshed and violence, represented millions of years of Earth's history. He also saw a world full of death, mutations, disease, suffering, bloodshed and violence today. So he concluded that any 'god' responsible for this seeming mess of life and death could not be all-powerful and all-knowing.

Sagan's view of God is consistent with his belief in an old Earth. Once one accepts billions of years for the age of the Earth, whether because of belief in slow and gradual processes to form rocks and fossils—and/or a trust in radiometric dating methods as giving accurate ages of rocks²—it follows that the fossil record was laid down during hundreds of millions of years, before there were any people (and thus before human sin).

However, the fossil record is not a pretty one! It shows evidence of animals eating each other,³ of diseases like cancer in their bones, of violence,⁴ of plants with thorns⁵ and so on.

Sagan's writings show he was familiar with Genesis. What must he have thought when he read that at the end of the sixth day of creation, God pronounced that **everything** He had made was very good (Genesis 1:31)? How could a very good Earth contain diseases like cancer? Didn't the Bible state that thorns came after the curse because of Adam's sin (Genesis 3:18)?

Sagan is not the only one to recognize the true nature of the god of an old Earth. Irvan DeVore, a Harvard anthropologist, said:

*'I personally cannot discern a shred of evidence for a benign cosmic presence. I see indifference and capriciousness. What kind of God works with a 99.9 percent extinction rate?'*⁶

DeVore recognizes that the fossil record is one of massive extinction. If this has stretched over millions of years, enormous numbers of creatures have become extinct—without such a reason as a Flood judgment on man's wickedness. What kind of god would create such a scenario? The god of an old Earth can't be a loving God.

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The issue was a major one for Charles Darwin, too.⁷ How could a God of love allow such horrible processes as disease, suffering and death for millions of years?

Christians who believe in an old Earth (billions of years) need to come to grips with the real nature of the god of an old Earth—it is not the loving God of the Bible. Even many conservative, evangelical Christian leaders accept and actively promote a belief in millions and billions of years for the age of rocks. Many have been influenced by the progressive creationist movement⁸ as represented by its main spokesperson, Hugh Ross. In his book *Creation and Time*, Ross states:

‘Could it be that God’s purposes are somehow fulfilled through our experiencing the “random, wasteful, inefficiencies” of the natural realm He created?’⁹

Interestingly, the liberal camp points out the inconsistencies in holding to an old Earth, yet trying to cling to evangelical Christianity.

For instance, Bishop John Shelby Spong, the most senior Episcopal Bishop in America, states:

‘The Bible began with the assumption that God had created a finished and perfect world from which human beings had fallen away in an act of cosmic rebellion. Original sin was the reality in which all life was presumed to live. Darwin postulated instead an unfinished and thus imperfect creation. ... Human beings did not fall from perfection into sin as the Church had taught for centuries. ... Thus the basic myth of Christianity that interpreted Jesus as a divine emissary who came to rescue the victims of the fall from the results of their original sin became inoperative.’¹⁰

Elsewhere:

‘The Biblical story of the perfect and finished creation from which human beings fell into sin is pre-Darwinian mythology and post-Darwinian nonsense.’¹⁰

Evolutionist Spong obviously believes in millions of years for Earth’s history. Like the Progressive Creationists, he rejects a global Flood. Because they interpret the rocks in this way, neither Spong nor the Progressive Creationists can hold to a perfect world before sin. Spong makes it clear that the god of an old Earth cannot rescue people from a so-called Fall, when no such Fall as Genesis describes really occurred.¹¹

The recipient of the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion, Ian Barbour, professor emeritus at Carleton College, also said recently:

‘You simply can’t any longer say as traditional Christians that death was God’s punishment for sin. Death was around long before human beings ...’¹²

This is an obvious reference to the millions of years associated with the fossil record. The god of an old Earth is one that uses death as part of creating—death therefore can’t be the penalty for sin—or ‘the last enemy’ (1 Cor. 15:26).

In 1994, Tom Ambrose, an Anglican Priest, in an article in *The Church of England Newspaper*, succinctly portrayed the real god of an old Earth when he stated:

‘Fossils are the remains of creatures that lived and died for over a billion years before Homo sapiens evolved. Death is as old as life itself by all but a split second. Can it therefore be God’s punishment for Sin? The fossil record demonstrates that some form of evil has existed throughout time. On the large scale it is evident in natural disasters. The destruction of creatures by flood, ice age, desert and Earthquakes has happened countless times. On the individual scale there is ample evidence of painful, crippling disease and the activity of parasites. We see that living things have suffered in dying, with arthritis, a tumor, or simply being eaten by other creatures. From the dawn of

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*time, the possibility of life and death, good and evil, have always existed. At no point is there any discontinuity; there was never a time when death appeared, or a moment when the evil changed the nature of the universe. God made the world as it is ä evolution as the instrument of change and diversity. People try to tell us that Adam had a perfect relationship with God until he sinned, and all we need to do is repent and accept Jesus in order to restore that original relationship. But perfection like this never existed. There never was such a world. Trying to return to it, either in reality or spiritually, is a delusion. Unfortunately it is still central to much evangelical preaching.'*¹³

Spong makes it plain (and it's implied by Ambrose) that the Bible clearly teaches that there was a perfect creation, but it is now marred by sin. But they accept the millions of years history for the fossil record, so to be consistent, they have to throw out original sin, and death being the penalty for man's rebellion. **The god of an old Earth cannot therefore be the God of the Bible who is able to save us from sin and death.**

Thus Christians who compromise with the millions of years attributed by many scientists to the fossil record, are in that sense seemingly worshipping a different god—the cruel god of an old Earth.

The problem with people like Sagan and Darwin was that they didn't understand (or wouldn't accept) that there was a perfect world to begin with—it was **very good**.

However, in Adam we rebelled (Romans 5), and the resulting judgment of death and the Curse changed the very good world into one that is groaning in pain till now (Romans 8:22).

When looking at this present world, these men weren't looking at the nature of God, but the results of our sin! What a difference.

The God of the Bible, the God of mercy, grace and love, sent His one and only Son to be a man (but God nonetheless), to become our sin-bearer so that we could be saved from sin and its final effect of eternal separation from God:

'For He has made Him who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might become *the* righteousness of God in Him' (2 Corinthians 5:21).

There's no doubt—the god of an old Earth destroys the Gospel.


Let this be a challenge to the Church to return to the loving, holy, righteous God of the Bible.

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Some questions for theistic evolutionists (and ‘progressive creationists’)

by Don Batten

CONCEPT VIOLATED: THE GOODNESS OF GOD

The Bible says ‘God is good’ and in Genesis 1:31 God described His just finished Creation as ‘very good’. How do you understand the goodness of God if He used evolution, ‘nature red in tooth and claw’, to ‘create’ everything?

CONCEPT VIOLATED: ADAM’S SIN BROUGHT DEATH AND DECAY, THE BASIS OF THE GOSPEL

According to the evolutionist’s (and progressive creationist’s) understanding, fossils (which show death, disease and bloodshed) were formed before people appeared on Earth. Doesn’t that mean that you can’t believe the Bible when it says that everything is in ‘bondage to decay’ because of Adam’s sin (Romans 8)? In the evolutionary view, hasn’t the ‘bondage to decay’ always been there? And if death and suffering did not arise with Adam’s sin and the resulting curse, how can Jesus’ suffering and physical death pay the penalty for sin and give us eternal life, as the Bible clearly says (e.g. 1 Corinthians 15:22, For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all shall be made alive)?

CONCEPT VIOLATED: THE DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE WHOLE BIBLE

If the Genesis accounts of Creation, the Fall, the origin of nations, the Flood and the Tower of Babel—the first 11 chapters—are not historical, although they are written as historical narrative and understood by Jesus to be so, what other unfashionable parts of the Bible do you discard? The Biblical account of creation in Genesis seems very specific with six days of creative activity, each having an evening and a morning. According to the evolutionary sequence, the Biblical order of creation is all wrong. Do you think God should have inspired an account more in keeping with the evolutionary order, the truth as you see it, if indeed He did use evolution or followed the evolutionary pattern in creating everything?

CONCEPT VIOLATED: THE STRAIGHTFORWARD UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORD OF GOD

If the Genesis account does not mean what it plainly says, but must be ‘interpreted’ to fit an evolutionary world, how are we to understand the rest of the Bible? How are we to know that the historical accounts of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection should not also be ‘reinterpreted’? Indeed, can we know anything for sure if the Bible can be so flexible?

CONCEPT VIOLATED: THE CREATION IS SUPPOSED TO SHOW THE HAND OF GOD CLEARLY

Dr Niles Eldredge, well-known evolutionist, said:

‘Darwin . . . taught us that we can understand life’s history in purely naturalistic terms, without

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recourse to the supernatural or divine.’¹

Is it not philosophically inconsistent to marry God (theism) with evolution (naturalism)? If God ‘created’ using evolution which makes Him unnecessary, how can God’s ‘eternal power and divine nature’ be ‘clearly seen’ in creation, as Romans 1:20 says? Evolution has no purpose, no direction, no goal. The God of the Bible is all about purpose. How do you reconcile the purposelessness of evolution with the purposes of God? What does God have to do in an evolutionary world? Is not God an ‘unnecessary hypothesis’?

CONCEPT VIOLATED: THE NEED OF RESTORATION FOR THE CREATION

If God created over millions of years involving death, the existing Earth is not ruined by sin, but is as it always has been—as God supposedly intended it to be. So why then should He want to destroy it and create a new heavens and Earth (2 Peter 3 and other places)?

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Should Genesis Be Taken Literally?

by Russell Grigg

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Creationists are often accused of believing that the whole Bible should be taken literally. This is not so! Rather, the key to a correct understanding of any part of the Bible is to ascertain the intention of the author of the portion or book under discussion. This is not as difficult as it may seem, as the Bible obviously contains:

Poetry—as in the Psalms, where the repetition or parallelism of ideas is in accordance with Hebrew ideas of poetry, without the rhyme (parallelism of sound) and metre (parallelism of time) that are important parts of traditional English poetry. This, by the way, is the reason why the Psalms can be translated into other languages and still retain most of their literary appeal and poetic piquancy, while the elements of rhyme and metre are usually lost when traditional Western poetry is translated into other languages.

Parables—as in many of the sayings of Jesus, such as the parable of the sower (Matthew 13:3-23), which Jesus Himself clearly states to be a parable and about which He gives meanings for the various items, such as the seed and the soil.

Prophecy—as in the books of the last section of the Old Testament (Isaiah to Malachi).

Letters—as in the New Testament epistles written by Paul, Peter, John, and others.

Biography—as in the Gospels.

Autobiography/Testimony—as in the book of Acts where the author, Luke, after narrating the Apostle Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus as a historical fact (Acts 9:1-19), then describes two further occasions when Paul included this conversion experience as part of his own personal testimony (Acts 22:1-21; 26:1-22).

Authentic historical facts—as in the books of 1 and 2 Kings, etc.

Thus the author's intention with respect to any book of the Bible is usually quite clear from the style and the content. Who then was the author of Genesis, and what intention is revealed by his style and the content of what he wrote?

THE AUTHOR

The Lord Jesus Himself and the Gospel writers said that the Law was given by Moses (Mark 10:3; Luke 24:27; John 1: 17), and the uniform tradition of the Jewish scribes and early Christian fathers, and the conclusion of conservative scholars to the present day, is that Genesis was written by Moses. This does not preclude the possibility that Moses had access to patriarchal records, preserved by being written on clay tablets and handed down from father to son via the line of Adam-Seth-Noah-Shem-Abraham-Isaac-Jacob, etc., as there are 11 verses in Genesis which read, 'These are the generations

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[Hebrew: *toledoth* = ‘origins’ or by extension ‘record of the origins’] of . . .’¹. As these statements all come after the events they describe, and the events recorded in each division all took place before rather than after the death of the individuals so named, they may very well be subscripts or closing signatures, i.e. colophons, rather than superscripts or headings. If this is so, the most likely explanation of them is that Adam, Noah, Shem, and the others each wrote down an account of the events which occurred in his lifetime, and Moses, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, selected and compiled these, along with his own comments, into the book we now know as Genesis².

Chapters 12-50 of Genesis were very clearly written as authentic history, as they describe the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and his 12 sons who were the ancestral heads of the 12 tribes of Israel. The Jewish people, from earliest Biblical times to the present day, have always regarded this portion of Genesis as the true record of their nation’s history.

So what about the first 11 chapters of Genesis, which are our main concern, as these are the ones that have incurred the most criticism from modern scholars, scientists, and sceptics?

GENESIS 1-11

Are any of these chapters *poetry*? To answer this question we need to examine in a little more depth just what is involved in the parallelism of ideas that constitutes Hebrew poetry.

Let us consider Psalm 1:1, which reads as follows: ‘Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.’ Here we see triple parallelism in the nouns and verbs used (reading downwards in the following scheme):

| | | |
|----------|---------|----------|
| walketh | counsel | ungodly |
| standeth | way | sinners |
| sitteth | seat | scornful |

As well as this overt parallelism, there is also a covert or subtle progression of meaning. In the first column, ‘walketh’ suggests short-term acquaintance, ‘standeth’ implies readiness to discuss, and ‘sitteth’ speaks of long-term involvement. In the second column, ‘counsel’ betokens general advice, ‘way’ indicates a chosen course of action, and ‘seat’ signifies a set condition of mind. In the third column, ‘ungodly’ describes the negatively wicked, ‘sinner’ characterizes the positively wicked, and ‘scornful’ portrays the contemptuously wicked.

Other types of Hebrew poetry include contrastive parallelism, as in Proverbs 27:6, ‘Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful’, and complete parallelism, as in Psalm 46:1, ‘God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of need.’³

And so we return to our question. Are any of the first 11 chapters of Genesis poetry?

Answer: No, because these chapters do not contain information or invocation in any of the forms of Hebrew poetry, in either overt or covert form, and because Hebrew scholars of substance are agreed that this is so (see below).

Note: There certainly is repetition in Genesis chapter 1, e.g. ‘And God said ...’ occurs 10 times; ‘and God saw that it was good/very good’ seven times; ‘after his/their kind’ 10 times; ‘And the evening and the morning were the ... day’ six times. However, these repetitions have none of the poetic forms discussed above; rather they are statements of fact and thus a record of what happened, and possibly for emphasis—to indicate the importance of the words repeated.

Are any of these chapters *parables*? No, because when Jesus told a parable He either said it was a parable, or He introduced it with a simile, so making it plain to the hearers that it was a parable, as

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on the many occasions when He said, 'The kingdom of heaven is like' No such claim is made or style used by the author of Genesis 1-11.

Are any of these chapters *prophecy*? Not in their full context, although two promises of God are prophetic in the sense that their fulfilment would be seen in the future. One of these is Genesis 3:15, which was the pronouncement by God to the serpent (Satan) in metaphorical form: 'And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel' (NASB). Many have interpreted the 'seed' in this verse as the Messiah, including most evangelicals and even the Jewish Targums ⁴ hence the Talmudic expression 'heels of the Messiah'. ⁵ The Messiah would suffer wounds to His feet (on the Cross), but would completely destroy Satan's power. This verse also hints at the *Virginal Conception*, as the Messiah is called the seed of the woman, contrary to the normal Biblical practice of naming the father rather than the mother of a child (cf. Genesis chapters 5 and 11, 1 Chronicles chapters 1-9, Matthew chapter 1, Luke 3:23-38).

The other is Genesis 8:21-22 and 9:11-17,

'And the LORD said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake . . . and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.'

Are any of these chapters *letters, biography, or autobiography/personal testimony*? This is where we need to consider some of the subscripts mentioned above.

If Adam knew the events of Creation Days 1-6, they must have been revealed to him by God, as Adam was not made until Day 6, and so he could have known them only if God had told him. This view is reinforced by the words, 'These are the generations of [NIV: 'This is the account of'] the heavens and of the earth when they were created . . .' in Genesis 2:4a. The details of Day 7, the rest day, are included before this in Genesis 2:2-3, thereby completing (as we might expect) the record of a full seven-day week, before this subscript or closing signature appears.

Then follow the events of Genesis 2:4b-5:1a. This section tells us about Adam, his wife Eve, and their sons, and reads very much like a personal account of what Adam knew, saw, and experienced concerning the Garden of Eden, and the creation of Eve (chapter 2), their rebellion against God (chapter 3), and the deeds of their descendants (chapter 4 to 5:1), albeit written in the third person ⁶. This section ends with the words, 'This is the book of the generations of Adam.'

Is it feasible that Adam could have written Genesis 1:1-2:4a as the result of his pre-Fall conversation with God, and Genesis 2:4b-5:1 as the record of his own experiences? There is no problem concerning his ability to have done so. Adam was created a mature man, endowed with all the DNA, knowledge and skill he needed to perform all the tasks assigned him by God. No cave-man he! Adam knew enough horticulture 'to dress and to keep' the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15), and ample intelligence to recognize and name the distinct kinds of animals (Genesis 2: 19). He (and Eve) could converse with God without ever having learned an alphabet, and there is no reason to suppose that he was not fully skilled in writing also⁷.

SUPPOSED CONTRADICTIONS

What about the supposed contradictions between the order of events in Genesis chapter 2 and the order given in chapter 1?

There are **none**!

If, with the NIV, we read 'Now the LORD God **had** planted a garden in the east . . .' (Genesis 2:8) and, 'Now the LORD God **had** formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field . . .' (Genesis 2:19 with emphasis added), it is clearly seen that chapter 2 states that the plants and animals were

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formed before Adam. When Adam named the animals (Genesis 2:20), they obviously were already in existence. There is no contradictory significance in the order of animals listed in Genesis 2:20; it is probably the order in which Adam met the animals, while the order of their creation is given in Genesis 1:20-25. Dr Henry Morris comments:

*'It was only the animals in closest proximity and most likely as theoretical candidates for companionship to man that were actually brought to him. These included the birds of the air, the cattle (verse 20 - probably the domesticated animals), and the beasts of the field, which were evidently the smaller wild animals that would live near human habitations. Those not included were the fish of the sea, the creeping things, and the beasts of the earth mentioned in Genesis 1:24, which presumably were those wild animals living at considerable distance from man and his cultivated fields.'*⁸

Concerning the *names* of geographical sites, we have no idea what the configuration of the land or the rivers was before the Flood, because the pre-Flood world was completely destroyed. The land areas and rivers named before the Flood do not correspond to similarly named features after the Flood.

The *purpose* of Genesis 2:18-25 is not to give another account of creation but to show that there was no *kinship* whatsoever between Adam and the animals. None was *like* him, and so none could provide fellowship or companionship *for* him. Why not? Because Adam had not evolved from them, but was 'a living soul' whom God had created 'in His own image' (Genesis 2:7 and 1:27). This means (among other things) that God created Adam to be a person whom He could address, and who could respond to and interact with Himself. Here, as in many other places, the plain statements of the Bible confront and contradict the notion of human evolution.

There is therefore enough evidence for us to conclude that Adam most probably was the author of Genesis 2:4b-5:1, and that this is his record of his own experiences with respect to events in the Garden of Eden, the creation of Eve, the Fall, and in the lives of Cain, Abel, and Seth.

The next section is from 5:1b to 6:9a, and deals with the line from Adam to Noah, ending with, 'These *are* the generations [or origins] of Noah.'

The next section is from 6:9b to 10:1a, and deals mainly with the Ark and the Flood, ending with, 'Now these *are* the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.' The wording of this subscript suggests that this portion was written by one of Noah's sons, probably Shem, as Moses was descended from Shem. These chapters read very much like an eye-witness account because of the intimacy of detail which they contain. Consider Genesis 8:6-12 and note how this contains that ring of authenticity which is characteristic of an eye-witness account. It may even have been Shem's diary!

Genesis 8:6-12:

6 And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made:

7 And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

8 Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground;

9 But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.

10 And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark;

11 And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

12 And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto

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him any more. (KJV).

Such meticulous details are the stuff of authentic eye-witness testimony. They have the ring of truth.

There is thus a substantial body of evidence that these portions of Genesis delineated by subscripts were written by the persons named therein, for the purpose of making and passing on a permanent record.

So then, were these first 11 chapters written as *a record of authentic historical facts*?

Answer: Yes, for several reasons.

INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS

1. There is the internal evidence of the book of Genesis itself. As already mentioned, chapters 12-50 have always been regarded by the Jewish people as being the record of their own true history, and the style of writing contained in chapters 1-11 is not strikingly different from that in chapters 12-50.
2. Hebrew scholars of standing have always regarded this to be the case. Thus, Professor James Barr, Regius Professor of Hebrew at the University of Oxford, has written:

Probably, so far as I know, there is no professor of Hebrew or Old Testament at any world-class university who does not believe that the writer(s) of Genesis 1-11 intended to convey to their readers the ideas that:

(a) creation took place in a series of six days which were the same as the days of 24 hours we now experience

(b) the figures contained in the Genesis genealogies provided by simple addition a chronology from the beginning of the world up to later stages in the Biblical story

(c) Noah's flood was understood to be world-wide and extinguish all human and animal life except for those in the ark.

Or, to put it negatively, the apologetic arguments which suppose the "days" of creation to be long eras of time, the figures of years not to be chronological, and the flood to be a merely local Mesopotamian flood, are not taken seriously by any such professors, as far as I know.'⁹

3. One of the main themes of Genesis is the Sovereignty of God. This is seen in God's actions in respect of four outstanding events in Genesis 1-11 (Creation, the Fall, the Flood, and the Babel dispersion), and His relationship to four outstanding people in Genesis 12-50 (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph). There is thus a unifying theme to the whole of the book of Genesis, which falls to the ground if any part is mythical and not true history; on the other hand, each portion reinforces the historical authenticity of the other.¹⁰

EVIDENCE FROM THE REST OF THE BIBLE

4. The principal people mentioned in Genesis chapters 1-11 are referred to as real—historical, not mythical—people in the rest of the Bible, often many times. For example, *Adam*, *Eve*, *Cain*, *Abel*, and *Noah* are referred to in 15 other books of the Bible.
5. The Lord Jesus Christ referred to the Creation of Adam and Eve as a real historical event, by quoting Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 in His teaching about divorce (Matthew 19:3-6; Mark 10:2-9), and by referring to Noah as a real historical person and the Flood as a real historical event, in His teaching about the 'coming of the Son of man' (Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17: 26-27).
6. Unless the first 11 chapters of Genesis are authentic historical events, the rest of the Bible is incomplete and incomprehensible as to its full meaning. The theme of the Bible is Redemption, and may be outlined thus:

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- i. God's redeeming purpose is revealed in Genesis 1-11,
- ii. God's redeeming purpose progresses from Genesis 12 to Jude 25, and
- iii. God's redeeming purpose is consummated in Revelation 1-22.

But why does mankind need to be redeemed? What is it that he needs to be redeemed from? The answer is given in Genesis 1-11, namely, from the ruin brought about by sin. Unless we know that the entrance of sin to the human race was a true historical fact, God's purpose in providing a substitutionary atonement is a mystery. Conversely, the historical truth of Genesis 1-11 shows that all mankind has come under the righteous anger of God and needs salvation from the penalty, power, and presence of sin.

7. Unless the events of the first chapters of Genesis are true history, the Apostle Paul's explanation of the Gospel in Romans chapter 5 and of the resurrection in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 has no meaning. Paul writes: 'For as by one man's [Adam's] disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one [Jesus] shall many be made righteous' (Romans 5:19). And, 'For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive ... And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit' (1 Corinthians 15:21-22; 45). The historical truth of the record concerning the first Adam is a guarantee that what God says in His Word about the last Adam [Jesus] is also true. Likewise, the historical, literal truth of the record concerning Jesus is a guarantee that what God says about the first Adam is also historically and literally true.

CONCLUSION

We return to the question which forms the title of this article. Should Genesis be taken literally?

Answer: If we apply the normal principles of Biblical exegesis (ignoring pressure to make the text conform to the evolutionary prejudices of our age), it is overwhelmingly obvious that Genesis was meant to be taken in a straightforward, obvious sense as an authentic, literal, historical record of what actually happened.

REFERENCES

- 1 See Genesis 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1; 36:9; 37:2.
- 2 The seminal author on the colophon concepts was P.J. Wiseman, *Creation Revealed in Six Days*, Marshall, Morgan & Scott, London, 1948, pp. 45-53. For an excellent evaluation of this by a evangelical linguist see *The Oldest Science Book in the World*, by Dr Charles V. Taylor, Assembly Press, Queensland, 1984, pp. 21-23, 73, 121.
- 3 This discussion of Hebrew poetry was adapted from J. Sidlow Baxter, *Explore the Book*, Vol. 1, pp. 13-16.
- 4 Aramaic paraphrases of the OT originating in the last few centuries BC, and committed to writing about AD 500. See F.F. Bruce, *The Books and the Parchments*, (Westwood: Fleming H. Revell Co., Rev. Ed. 1963), p. 133.
- 5 A. G. Fruchtenbaum, *Apologia* 2(3):54-58, 1993.
- 6 The use of the third person is no problem. Moses wrote the long account of his own life in Exodus to Deuteronomy in the third person, and many classical authors like Julius Caesar also wrote in the third person.
- 7 Adam and Eve knew how to sew fig-leaf 'aprons' for themselves (Genesis 3:7). Within a few generations, Adam's descendants founded a city (Genesis 4:17), were tent-makers, cattle farmers,



musicians with the ability to make both stringed and wind instruments, and metallurgists with the ability to smelt the ores of copper, tin and iron and then to forge all kinds of bronze and iron tools (Genesis 4:20-24). Dr Henry M. Morris comments in *The Genesis Record* (Baker Book house, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976, pp. 146-7):

‘It is significant to note that the elements which anthropologists identify as the attributes of the emergence of evolving men from the stone age into true civilization—urbanization, agriculture, animal domestication, and metallurgy—were all accomplished quickly by the early descendants of Adam and did not take hundreds of thousands of years.’

- 8 Henry Morris *The Genesis Record*, p. 97.
- 9 Letter from Professor James Barr to David C.C. Watson of the UK, dated April 23, 1984. Copy held by the author. Note that Prof. Barr does not claim to believe that Genesis is historically true; he is just telling us what, in his opinion, the language was meant to convey.
- 10 Adapted from J. Sidlow Baxter, *Explore the Book*, Vol. 1, pp. 27-29.

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Which is the recent aberration— Old-Earth or Young-Earth Belief?

by Don Batten

Critics of *AiG*'s stand on Biblical chronology, including 'progressive creationists', often claim or imply that belief in a Creation that is thousands of years old instead of the billions touted today is a recent invention of Protestant 'fundamentalist' churches. They claim that various church fathers or other ancient authorities wrote things that suggested that they did not hold to this 'young Earth' view.

However, the claims about the church fathers and Reformers have been shown to be wrong, as shown in the rebuttal to the long-ager Hugh Ross by Mark Van Bebber and Paul Taylor. It's also vital to analyse what they *actually* say instead of what people *claim* they say.

One problem is that sometimes a non-specific statement about creation is misinterpreted as claiming that they didn't have a position on the days and time frame, obviously the fallacy of arguing from silence. It's worse when clear statements about the Creation days and time frame are ignored in favor of nonspecific ones. The correct practice is to interpret the nonspecific passages by the specific ones. Note that by the same methodology, someone hundreds of years in the future could find articles by every *AiG* writer that are not specific on days or the time frame and, by ignoring their clear statements elsewhere, claim that we don't have any position on the issues!

Even Augustine cannot remotely be used in support of old-Earth beliefs, even though he allegorized the days of creation (and lots of other passages—he was no Hebrew scholar). The problem is, he tried to compress the days into an *instant*, which is *diametrically opposite* to what long-agers claim!

Furthermore, when ancient chronologies are researched, we find that many cultures, not just those based directly on the Bible, attest to an age of the Creation of thousands of years. It seems that no serious scholar believed in the old Earth fashion of today. It is very much a modernist invention.

The following comes from Young's *Analytical Concordance to the Holy Bible*, first published in 1879. Under 'Creation', Young listed dates of Creation compiled by a Dr William Hales in 1830, who was an expert in chronology, from varied sources. None of them give a date of Creation of more than 9,000 years ago. Note that dates of Creation from various non-Christian / non-Jewish sources (India, Egypt, China, pre-Christian Greece, Babylonia, etc.) all testify to an age of thousands of years. Furthermore, both Catholic and Protestant scholars agreed on this issue. It seems that no serious chronologist believed in an old Earth.

Many of the scholars listed in this table made the chronology of the world a life-long study involving meticulous cross-matching of ancient records (many of which are not available to us today). These scholars did not obtain these dates by throwing dice! It is only the arrogance of modern man that dismisses this tradition of careful scholarship.

We must underline again the importance of this issue. The old Earth advocates accept the recent claim that the Earth is billions of years old. This 'age' is based on radioactive dating. The same 'dating' puts the age of fossilized dead animals at up to hundreds of millions of years before people appeared on the scene. These fossils show evidence of violence and suffering (cancer and arthritis can be seen in the

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fossils, for example). So in the old Earth schemes, all this death and suffering was going on when God created Adam and Eve and pronounced everything as ‘very good’ (Genesis 1:31). Hardly!

The Bible is clear that the bad things came into being when Adam and Eve rejected the rule of the Creator over His creatures and the curse of death came into effect (Genesis 3:17–19, Romans 8:20–22, etc.). And this true history of the world is the very reason that Jesus, the ‘last Adam’, came into the world (Romans 5:12 ff., 1 Cor. 15:21–22,45).

No, all attempts to marry the Bible with the old Earth view actually undermine the Gospel.

DATE OF CREATION

(from *Young’s Analytical Concordance of the Holy Bible*, 1879 8th Edition, 1939—entry under ‘Creation’)

‘Dr Hales, in his work entitled, “A New Analysis of Chronology and Geography, History and Prophecy,” (vol. 1, p. 210 [published in 1830]), remarks: “In every system of chronology, sacred and profane, the two grand eras—of the Creation of the World, and of the Nativity of Christ—have been usually adopted as standards, by reference to which all subordinate epochs, eras and periods have been adjusted.” He gives a list of 120 dates, commencing B.C. 6984, and terminating BC 3616, to which this event has been assigned by different authorities, and he admits that it might be swelled to 300. He places it at BC 5411. The date commonly adopted is BC 4004; being that of Ussher, Spanheim, Calmet, Blair, etc., and the one used in the English Bible [KJV].’

‘The following are some of the principal variations:’ (notations regarding dates of compilation or publication, extra information on sources, etc., have been added by *AiG*).

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| Alfonso X | (Spain, 1200s) | Muller 6984 |
| Strauchius¹ | (Gyles AD 1632–1682) | 6484 |
| Indian chronology | Gentil, French astronomer c.1760 | 6204 |
| Arab records | | 6174 |
| Babylonian chronology | Bailly (French astronomer, 1736–1793) | 6158 |
| Chinese chronology | Bailly | 6157 |
| Diogenes Laertius | (Greece 3rd Cent.) | Playfair 6138 |
| Egyptian chronology | Bailly | 6081 |
| Septuagint (LXX)² | Albufaragi | 5586 |
| Septuagint, Alexandrine | Scaliger, Joseph (1540–1609) | 5508 |
| Persian chronology | Bailly | 5507 |
| Chronicle of Axum, Abyssinian | Bruce (1700s) | 5500 |
| Jackson | | 5426 |
| Josephus | (1st Century Jew) | Playfair 5555 |



| | | |
|--|---|------|
| Jackson | | 5481 |
| Hales | | 5411 |
| Hales | | 5402 |
| Indian computation | Megasthenes, ³ Greek historian c. 340–282 B.C. | 5369 |
| Talmudists | Petrus Alliacens | 5344 |
| Septuagint, Vatican | | 5270 |
| Bede (AD 673–735) | Strauchius | 5199 |
| Univ. Hist. | | 4698 |
| Samaritan computation | Scaliger | 4427 |
| Samaritan text | Univ. Hist. | 4305 |
| Hebrew (Masoretic) text | | 4161 |
| Playfair and Walker | | 4008 |
| Ussher, Spanheim, Calmet, Blair, etc. | | 4004 |
| Kepler (1571–1630) | Playfair | 3992 |
| Petavius (France, AD 1583–1652) | | 3984 |
| Melanchthon (1500s) | Playfair | 3964 |
| Luther (1500s) | | 3961 |
| Lightfoot | | 3960 |
| Cornelius a Lapide | Univ. Hist. | 3951 |
| Scaliger, Isaacson | | 3950 |
| Strauchius | | 3949 |
| Vulgar Jewish computation | Strauchius | 3760 |
| Rabbi Lipman (AD 1579–1654) | Univ. Hist. | 3616 |

NOTES

1. Breviarium Chronologicum Book IV, 3rd edition, 1699 in English.
2. The Greek translation of the Old Testament originally published in Egypt BC.
3. A Greek historian from Iona, he was Ambassador to India for King Seleucus I. He published *Indika* in four books.

Genesis Contradictions?

by Don Batten

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In Genesis chapter 2 the order of creation seems to be different to that in chapter 1 with the animals being created (2:19) after Adam (2:7). Doesn't the Bible contradict itself here?

Between the creation of Adam and the creation of Eve, the KJV/AV Bible says (Genesis 2:19) 'out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air'. On the surface, this seems to say that the land beasts and birds were created between Adam and Eve. However, Jewish scholars apparently did not recognize any such conflict with the account in chapter 1, where Adam and Eve were both created after the beasts and birds (Genesis 1:23–25). Why is this? Because in Hebrew the precise tense of a verb is determined by the context. It is clear from chapter 1 that the beasts and birds were created before Adam, so Jewish scholars would have understood the verb 'formed' in Genesis 2:19 to mean 'had formed' or 'having formed'. If we translate verse 19 as follows (as one widely used translation* does), 'Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field ...', the apparent disagreement with Genesis 1 disappears completely.

The question also stems from the wrong assumption that the second chapter of Genesis is just a different account of creation to that in chapter 1. It should be evident that chapter 2 is not just 'another' account of creation because chapter 2 says nothing about the creation of the heavens and the earth, the atmosphere, the seas, the land, the sun, the stars, the moon, the sea creatures, etc. Chapter 2 mentions only things directly relevant to the creation of Adam and Eve and their life in the garden God prepared specially for them. Chapter 1 may be understood as creation from God's perspective; it is 'the big picture', an overview of the whole. Chapter 2 views the more important aspects from man's perspective.

Genesis 2:4 says, 'These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens'. This marks a break with chapter 1. This phraseology next occurs in Genesis 5:1, where it reads 'This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man'.

'Generations' is a translation of the Hebrew word *toledoth*, which means 'origin' or 'record of the origin'. It identifies an account or record of events. The phrase was apparently used at the end of each section in Genesis¹ identifying the patriarch (Adam, Noah, the sons of Noah, Shem, etc.) to whom it primarily referred, and possibly who was responsible for the record. There are 10 such divisions in Genesis.

Each record was probably originally a stone or clay tablet. There is no person identified with the account of the origin of the heavens and the Earth (Genesis 1:1–2:4), because it refers primarily to the origin of the whole universe, not any person in particular (Adam and Eve are not mentioned by name, for example). Also, only God knew the events of creation, so God had to reveal this, possibly to Adam who recorded it. Moses, as 'author' of Genesis, acted as a compiler and editor of the various sections, adding explanatory notes under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The *toledoths* acknowledge the

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sources of the historical records Moses used. This understanding underlines the historical nature of Genesis and its status as eyewitness history, contrary to the defunct ‘documentary (JEDP) hypothesis’ still taught in many Bible colleges.

The differences in the *toledoth* statements of Genesis 1:4 and 5:1 affirm that chapter 1 is the overview the record of the origin of the ‘heavens and Earth’(1:4)—where as chapter 2 is concerned with Adam and Eve, the detailed account of Adam and Eve’s creation (5:1,2). The wording of 2:4 also suggests the shift in emphasis: in the first part of the verse it is ‘heavens and Earth’ where as in the end of the verse it is ‘Earth and heaven’. Scholars think that the first part of the verse would have been on the end of a clay or stone tablet recording the origin of the universe and the latter part of the verse would have been on the beginning of a second tablet containing the account of events on Earth pertaining particularly to Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:4b–5:1a).

Let us apply this understanding to another objection: some also see a problem with the plants and herbs in Genesis 2:5 and the trees in Genesis 2:9. We have already realized that Genesis 2 focuses on issues of direct import to Adam and Eve, not creation in general. Notice that the plants and herbs are described as ‘of the field’ in Genesis chapter 2 (compare 1:12) and they needed a man to tend them (2:5). These are clearly cultivated plants, not just plants in general. Also, the trees (2:9) are only the trees planted in the garden, not trees in general.

Genesis was written like many historical accounts with an overview or summary of events leading up to the events of most interest first, followed by a detailed account which often recaps relevant events in the overview in greater detail. Genesis 1, the ‘big picture,’ is clearly concerned with the sequence of events. The events are in chronological sequence, with day 1, day 2, evening and morning, etc. The order of events is not the major concern of Genesis 2. In recapping events they are not necessarily mentioned in chronological order, but in the order which makes most sense to the focus of the account. For example, the animals are mentioned in verse 19, after Adam was created, because it was after Adam was created that he was shown the animals, not that they were created after Adam.

Genesis chapters 1 and 2 are not therefore separate contradictory accounts of creation. Chapter 1 is the ‘big picture’ and Chapter 2 is a more detailed account of the creation of Adam and Eve and day six of creation.

The final word on this matter, however, should really be given to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. In Matthew chapter 19, verses 4 and 5, the Lord is addressing the subject of marriage, and says: ‘Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?’

Notice how in the very same statement, Jesus refers to both Genesis 1 (verse 27b: ‘male and female created he them’) and Genesis 2 (verse 24: ‘Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh’). Obviously, by combining both in this way, He in no way regarded them as separate, contradictory accounts.

REFERENCE AND FOOTNOTE

1. Charles Taylor, Who wrote Genesis? Are the toledoths colophons? *Creation Technical Journal* 8(2):204–211, 1994.

* The NIV.

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Did Moses really write Genesis?

by Russell Grigg

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Above: *The mountain today named Mt Sinai (foreground). The Bible says that God gave His laws to the Israelites, through Moses, on Mt Sinai.*

A deadly hypothesis denying that Moses had anything to do with Genesis, based on spurious scholarship, is still widely being taught to future Christian leaders.

Nearly all liberal Bible colleges and seminaries, and sadly some which profess conservative evangelical doctrine, approvingly teach the ‘documentary hypothesis’, also known as the ‘JEDP hypothesis’.

WHAT IS THE DOCUMENTARY HYPOTHESIS?

This is the liberal/critical view which denies that Moses wrote Genesis to Deuteronomy. It teaches that various anonymous authors compiled these five books (plus other portions of the Old Testament) from centuries of oral tradition, up to 900 years after Moses lived (if, in this view, he even existed). These hypothetical narrators are designated as follows:

- **J** (standing for what the documentary hypothesists would term Jahwist) supposedly lived about 900–850 BC. He/she/they allegedly gathered the myths and legends of Babylon and other nations, and added them to the ‘camp-fire stories’ of the Hebrews, producing those Biblical passages where the Hebrew letters YHWH (‘Jehovah’) are used as the name of God.
- **E** (standing for Elohist) supposedly lived about 750–700 BC in the northern kingdom (Israel), and wrote those passages where *Elohim* is used as the word for God.
- **D** supposedly wrote most of Deuteronomy, probably the book found in the temple in Jerusalem in 621 BC. (2 Kings 22:8).
- **P** supposedly represents a Priest (or priests) who lived during the exile in Babylon and allegedly

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composed a code of holiness for the people.

- Various editors **R** (from German *Redakteur*) supposedly put it all together.

The idea of multiple authorship of these books was first proposed by Jean Astruc in Paris in 1753. However, the foremost exponent was Julius Wellhausen (1844–1918), who ‘restated the Documentary Hypothesis ... in terms of the evolutionary view of history which was prevalent in philosophical circles at the time’.^{1,2} He claimed that those parts of the Old Testament that dealt with sophisticated doctrine (one God, the Ten Commandments, the tabernacle, etc.) were not truth revealed by the living God, but were ideas that evolved from lower stages of thinking, including polytheism, animism, ancestor worship, etc.³ Hence the ‘need’ to find or fabricate later authors. One of the main arguments was that writing had supposedly not been invented yet at the time of Moses.

Thus the documentary hypothesis undermines the authenticity of the Genesis Creation/Fall/Flood accounts, as well as the whole patriarchal history of Israel. It presupposes that the whole of the Old Testament is one gigantic literary fraud, and calls into question not only the integrity of Moses, but also the trustworthiness/divinity of Jesus (see point 5 below). No wonder the critics have embraced it so warmly!

WAS MOSES J, E, D, P, OR R?

Answer: He was none of the above. Rather, Moses himself was both writer and editor of the Pentateuch, and these five books were composed by him in about 1400 BC, not by unknowns at the time of the Exile. This does not mean that Moses did not use other written sources available to him (see later), or that he wrote the last few verses of Deuteronomy 34 that record his death. Talmudic (Rabbinic Jewish) tradition has always been that these were added, under divine inspiration, by Joshua.

There is no external evidence at all in support of J, E, D, P, or R. What were their names? What else did these alleged literary savants write? History, both Hebrew and secular, knows nothing of them. They exist only in the fertile imaginations of the inventors of the documentary hypothesis.

EVIDENCE FOR MOSES’ AUTHORSHIP OF THE PENTATEUCH

The evidence that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, often referred to in the Bible as ‘the Law’ (Hebrew *torah*), is overwhelming:

1. Contrary to the views of Wellhausen and others, archaeological research has established that writing was indeed well known in Moses’ day. The JEDP hypothesis falsely assumes that the Israelites waited until many centuries after the foundation of their nation before committing any of their history or laws to written form, even though their neighbours kept written records of their own history and religion from before the time of Moses.⁴
2. The author is obviously an eyewitness of the Exodus from Egypt, familiar with the geography,⁵ flora and fauna of the region;⁶ he uses several Egyptian words,⁷ and refers to customs that go back to the second millennium BC.⁸
3. The Pentateuch claims in many places that Moses was the writer, e.g. Exodus 17:14; 24:4–7; 34:27; Numbers 33:2; Deuteronomy 31:9, 22, 24.
4. Many times in the rest of the Old Testament, Moses is said to have been the writer, e.g. Joshua 1:7–8; 8:32–34; Judges 3:4; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 14:6; 21:8; 2 Chronicles 25:4; Ezra 6:18; Nehemiah 8:1; 13:1; Daniel 9:11–13.
5. In the New Testament, Jesus frequently spoke of Moses’ writings or the Law of Moses, e.g.



Matthew 8:4; 19:7–8; Mark 7:10; 12:26; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:46–47; 7:19. Jesus said that those who ‘hear not [i.e. reject] Moses’ would not be persuaded ‘though one rose from the dead’ (Luke 16:31). Thus we see that those churches and seminaries which reject the historicity of Moses’ writings often also reject the literal bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

6. Other New Testament speakers/writers said the same thing, e.g. John 1:17; Acts 6:14; 13:39; 15:5; 1 Corinthians 9:9; 2 Corinthians 3:15; Hebrews 10:28.

Does this mean that Moses wrote Genesis without reference to any previous information? Not necessarily. Genesis comprises narratives of historical events that occurred before Moses was born. Moses may very well have had access to patriarchal records and/or reliable oral traditions of these events. In that case, such records would certainly have been preserved by being written (probably on clay tablets) and handed down from father to son via the line of Adam-Seth-Noah-Shem-Abraham-Isaac-Jacob, etc.

There are 11 verses in Genesis which read, ‘These are (or ‘This is the book of’) the generations of ...’ The Hebrew word *toledoth* translated ‘generations’ can also mean ‘origins’, ‘history’, or even ‘family history’, and each verse comes either before or after a description of historical events that involved the person named.⁹ The most likely explanation is that Adam, Noah, Shem, etc. each wrote an account of the events that occurred either right before or during his lifetime, and Moses, under the infallible inspiration of the Holy Spirit, selected, compiled, and edited these to produce Genesis in its present cohesive form.¹⁰

Genesis does not show a progress from idolatry to monotheism, as Wellhausen’s evolutionism requires. Rather, the Bible begins with an original revelation of God, which was later rejected to the point that the Hebrew nation itself descended into idolatry and so was given over to captivity by God.

WHAT ABOUT THE DIFFERENT WORDS USED FOR GOD?

Let us consider this in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. The word *’Elohim* is used for God 25 times in Genesis 1:1–2:4a.¹¹ It has the idea of an awesome and faithful Being, having creative and governing power, majesty and omnipotence, who is above the material world He created. It is a lofty *title* (= ‘God’) and is the appropriate word for Moses to have used for the first factual report of God’s creative activities.¹²

In Genesis chapter 2 from verse 4, the Hebrew uses the letters YHWH to refer to God. Sometimes translated ‘Jehovah’, it is more often translated ‘Lord’ (in small capitals), and is the most commonly used term for God in the Old Testament (6,823 times). It means ‘the One who always was, now is, and ever shall be’ and is the deeply personal *name* of God. It is therefore used in His *personal and covenant relationships* with people. Genesis 2:4b ff is the detailed account of how God made Adam and Eve, and of the setting He prepared for them.¹³ Here they were meant to live and work in loving covenantal fellowship with Him¹⁴ and with each other. It was entirely appropriate therefore that Moses should have used YHWH in writing this section of Genesis. In Genesis 2, YHWH is joined to *’Elohim* to form the compound name YHWH-*’Elohim* (= the Lord God). This identifies the covenant God YHWH as being one and the same as *’Elohim*, the almighty creator. There is no logical reason (particularly any based on the term used for God) to ascribe this account to any other author(s).

The same principles apply in the rest of Genesis and throughout the Old Testament.

The JEDP system is self-contradictory, as its proponents need to break verses into sections and even credit parts of sentences (that use more than one term for God) to different writers. Such a hotchpotch would be unique in ancient Middle Eastern literature.

The ‘scholarship’ used to promote the documentary hypothesis would be laughed out of court if

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applied to any other ancient book!

COMPUTER AGREES: GENESIS HAD ONLY ONE AUTHOR

The following quote comes from *Omni* magazine of August 1982:

'After feeding the 20,000 Hebrew words of Genesis into a computer at Technion University in Israel, researchers found many sentences that ended in verbs and numerous words of six characters or more. Because these idiosyncratic patterns appear again and again, says project director Yehuda Radday, it seems likely that a sole author was responsible. Their exhaustive computer analysis conducted in Israel suggested an 82 percent probability that the book has just one author.'

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, the author of Genesis was God, working through Moses. This does not mean that God used Moses as a 'typewriter'. Rather, God prepared Moses for his task from the day he was born. When the time came, Moses had all the necessary data, and was infallibly guided by the Holy Spirit as to what he included and what he left out. This is consistent with known history, and with the claims and principles of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:15–17; 2 Peter 1:20–21).

On the other hand there is no historical evidence, and no spiritual or theological basis whatsoever for the deceptive JEDP hypothesis. Its teaching is completely false; the 'scholarship' that promotes it is totally spurious. Propped up by the theory of evolution, it exists solely to undermine the authority of the Word of God.

To Right: *Clay tablets like this were ideal for long-term written records. Far from 'Flintstones' clumsiness, these could be held in one hand.*

Patriarchal records may have been carried on the Ark, later used by Moses in compiling Genesis (under inspiration).



REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. Josh McDowell, *More Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, Here's Life Publishers, 1981, p. 45.
2. Notable exponents of Wellhausenism were Samuel R. Driver in England (1891), and Charles A. Briggs in the USA (1893). Since Wellhausen's time, other liberal critics have 'found' up to 40 alleged contributors to the Pentateuch, including an Edomite source S and a Canaanite source K—there are almost as many subdivisions as there have been 'experts' finding sources!
3. Adapted from Dave Breese, *Seven Men Who Rule the World from the Grave*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1990, pp. 89 ff.
4. Adapted from Gleason Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, Zondervan, Michigan, 1982, pp. 51–52.
5. In Genesis 13:10 the Jordan valley is compared with 'the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar'—appropriate only for readers unfamiliar with the Jordan Valley in Palestine but acquainted with Egypt. Hence written near the time of the Exodus from Egypt, not many centuries later.
6. The crop sequence in Exodus 9:31–32 is Egyptian, not Palestinian. The trees and animals referred to are mostly indigenous to Egypt or the Sinai Peninsula, not Palestine, e.g. the acacia tree, used

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for the tabernacle furniture, is native to Egypt and Sinai, but is hardly found in Canaan, except around the Dead Sea. The skins prescribed for the outer covering of the tabernacle in Exodus 26:14 (Hebrew tachash), were most likely those of the dugong or sea cow (Zool. Sirenia)—found in the sea adjacent to Egypt and Sinai but foreign to Palestine. See ref. 4, p. 46 ff.

7. More Egyptian loan words are found in the Pentateuch than anywhere else in the Bible, as would be expected if the author was Moses 'learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians' (Acts 7:22). The very name 'Moses' is Egyptian not Hebrew (Exodus 2:10).
8. There is no mention in the Pentateuch of the temple, or that Jerusalem would be its future location—the only centre of worship mentioned was the tabernacle, a tent.
9. Genesis 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1; 36:9; 37:2. The first of these, 'These are the generations of the heavens and the earth' (Genesis 2:4), does not mention a human name, as no man was present during Creation Week until day six. The information was probably revealed by God to Adam, who then recorded it (ref. 10).
10. Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976, pp. 22–30; also Prof. Dr. F.N. Lee, personal communication, April 1998.
11. 'Elohim is a Hebrew plural form meaning 'more than two'. In Genesis 1:1 it occurs with the verb 'created' (Hebrew bara') in the singular form. It is thus a plural noun with a singular meaning, suggesting the uni-plurality of the Godhead. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity is thus foreshadowed in the Bible right from the very first verse. See also the use of the word 'us' in Genesis 1:26 and 11:7.
12. Note that the power of God associated with the use of this word is seen much more clearly in His having created the vast contents of space, as well as the astounding complexities and minutiae of life on Earth, in the short timespan of Creation Week, rather than in any long-drawn-out evolutionary timetable. See C.V. Taylor, *The First 100 Words*, The Good Book Co., Gosford, NSW, Australia, p. 3, 1996.
13. There is no contradiction between Genesis 1 and 2. In Matthew 19:3–6, Jesus quoted from both accounts together, 1:27 and 2:24, showing them to be equally authoritative and fully supplementary. See also D. Batten, Genesis Contradictions? *Creation* 18(4):44–45, 1996; R.M. Grigg, Should Genesis be taken literally? *Creation* 16(1):38–41, 1993.
14. Cf. Hosea 6:7: 'But they like men [Hebrew: literally 'like Adam' or 'in Adam'] have transgressed the covenant ...'

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From the Beginning of Creation Does Genesis have a Gap?

by Russell Grigg

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Is there a ‘gap’ of billions of years, in between verse 1 and verse 2 of Genesis chapter 1, into which Christians can conveniently assign the long ages claimed by evolutionary geologists?^{1,2}

WHAT IS THE GAP THEORY?

The gap theory is an attempt by some Christian theologians to make Genesis fit the popular belief that the universe is exceedingly old. Gappists believe in a literal Genesis, but accept an extremely long age (undefined) for the Earth. To reconcile these views, they fit the geological ages between verses 1 and 2 of Genesis 1. However, they are opposed to evolution.

According to Weston W. Fields, author of the definitive anti-gap book *Unformed and Unfilled*, the traditional or classical gap theory can be summarized as follows: ‘In the far distant dateless past God created a perfect heaven and perfect earth. Satan was ruler of the earth which was peopled by a race of “men” without any souls. Eventually, Satan, who dwelled in a garden of Eden composed of minerals (Ezekiel 28), rebelled by desiring to become like God (Isaiah 14). Because of Satan’s fall, sin entered the universe and brought on the earth God’s judgment in the form of a flood (indicated by the water of 1:2), and then a global Ice Age when the light and heat from the sun were somehow removed. All the plant, animal, and human fossils upon the earth today date from this “Lucifer’s flood” and do not bear any genetic relationship with the plants, animals and fossils living upon the earth today ...’ (Ref. 6, p. 7). Today’s creatures are a result of a 6-day recreation.

Note, however, that recently a new type of gap theory has surfaced in which there is no ruin or reconstruction; proponents just postulate a lengthy time gap only, with either ancient stars, an ancient Earth, or both.

WHAT DID MOSES INTEND TO CONVEY?

The most obvious and straightforward reading of Genesis 1 provides a *prima facie* case that Moses, under the direction of God, intended to write a literal historic account of what God had revealed to him (or to his antecedents), and not a cryptic message with clues for the super-intelligent. In other words, if God had meant us to understand that there was a gap of billions of years between verses 1 and 2, involving so many details about Satan, sin, judgment, punishment, re-creation, etc., we might reasonably expect that He would have provided the author with at least some of these alleged details. He did not. Nor are they to be found anywhere else in the Bible.³

In fact, orthodox Jews and conservative Christians have always read Genesis 1 as literal history. Prof. Davis Young, a theistic evolutionist geologist, admits:

‘It cannot be denied, in spite of frequent interpretations of Genesis 1 that departed from the rigidly

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literal, that the almost universal view of the Christian world until the 18th century was that the Earth was only a few thousand years old. Not until the development of modern scientific investigation of the Earth itself would this view be called into question within the church.’⁴

OTHER PARTS OF THE BIBLE ARE THE DEATH-KNELL FOR THE GAP THEORY

Genesis 1:31 says, ‘And God saw every thing that He had made, and behold it was very good.’ [The Hebrew is *meod tov*, which indicates perfection, a complete absence of evil of any kind, as Calvin and many other commentators have pointed out.] This is hardly an accurate description, if the being who became Satan had already rebelled! And if there were billions of ‘Lucifer-flood’ fossils with the marks of disease, violence, death, and decay, corresponding to the perishing of an entire pre-Adamic race and the extinction of a complete world of animals, with Adam and Eve walking around on top of buried fossils, how could God have called all this ‘very good’?⁵ [In their monumental Old Testament commentary, Keil and Delitzsche say about ‘very good’ in Gen. 1:31: ‘everything was perfect in its kind ... the existence of anything evil in the creation of God is absolutely denied, and the hypothesis entirely refuted, that the six days’ work merely subdued and fettered an ungodly, evil principle, which had already forced its way into it.’]

Genesis 6–9 describes a worldwide Flood in which all the air-breathing land animals which were not on Noah’s Ark died. As gappists assign the fossils to ‘Lucifer’s flood’, they are forced to conclude that Noah’s Flood left virtually no trace or was merely local. Surely a flood which is explicitly described in the Bible is a better source of the fossils than a hypothetical flood which the Bible does not mention at all!

Exodus 20:11 says, ‘For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is ...’ This is the definitive verse outside Genesis concerning the time frame of creation. It states categorically that God created everything in six days. There is just no allowance for a gap.⁶

Romans 5:12 states, ‘... by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin ...’ Adam was created on Day Six, but the classical gap theory says there was death during the gap before Day One. Not so, according to the Apostle Paul! This verse plainly says that death entered the world because of (and so *after*) Adam’s sin. There is nothing to restrict this verse to human death; on the contrary, Romans 8:20 says that the whole creation was made ‘subject to vanity’. Death could not therefore have been in the world (with fossils killed in the alleged ‘Lucifer’s flood’) *before* Adam sinned. Gappists must therefore say that Romans 5:12 and Genesis 3:3 refer only to spiritual death. This is not so. Adam began to die physically (Hebrew: ‘dying you will die’, that is, the process of dying would begin—Genesis 3:19, completed in Genesis 5:5), and he also died spiritually.⁷ Jesus experienced both physical death and spiritual death (Matthew 27:46) for us on the cross. See also 1 Corinthians 15:21–22.

THE ALLEGED BIBLICAL EVIDENCE FOR A GAP

Gappists’ arguments depend heavily on revisionist translations of a few Hebrew words.

1. The Hebrew words *bara* (‘create out of nothing’) and *asah* (‘make’).

Genesis 1:1 uses *bara* and Exodus 20:11 uses *asah*. Gappists claim that Exodus 20:11 refers to a re-creating and re-forming of a ruined world because, they claim, *bara* and *asah* cannot be used interchangeably.

Answer: The Hebrew word *bara* is used three times in Genesis 1, each representing the creation of a completely new entity—something which did not exist before.

In Genesis 1:1, *bara* is used of the creation of heavens and Earth.

In Genesis 1:21, *bara* is used of the creation of the first conscious animal (or *nephesh*) life.

In Genesis 1:27, *bara* is used of the creation of the first man, i.e. human life — made in God's image.

But Genesis 1:26 quotes God as saying, 'Let us make [*asah*] man in our image', whereas the very next verse says, 'So God created [*bara*] man in His own image.' The same event is here described by both *bara* and *asah*, so the verbs are obviously used interchangeably — the passage is Hebrew parallelism. Furthermore Genesis 2:4 says, 'These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created [*bara*], in the day that the Lord God made [*asah*] the earth and the heavens'. Here *bara* and *asah* are again used together in synonymous parallelism, again showing that they are used interchangeably by Moses.

Sometimes *asah* is clearly used to mean create *ex nihilo* (out of nothing), despite gappists' claims to the contrary, e.g. Nehemiah 9:6:

You alone are the LORD. You made (asah) the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.

2. "Waw" is the name of the Hebrew letter which is used as a conjunction. It can mean "and", "but", "now", "then", and several other things depending upon the context and type of waw involved.⁸ It occurs at the beginning of Genesis 1:2 and is translated in the KJV, 'And [*waw*] the earth was without form, and void.' Gappists use this translation to support the gap theory. However, the most straightforward reading of the text sees verse 1 of Genesis 1 as the principal subject-and-verb clause, with verse 2 containing three 'circumstantial clauses'. 'This is what [Hebrew grammarian] Gesenius terms a "*waw explicativum*" [also called *waw copulative* or *waw disjunctive*] or explanatory *waw*, and compares it to the English "to wit".'⁹

Such a waw disjunctive is easy to tell from the Hebrew, because it is formed by *waw* followed by a non-verb. It introduces a parenthetical statement, that is, it's alerting the reader to put the following passage in brackets, as it were—a descriptive phrase about the previous noun. It does *not* indicate something following in a time sequence—this would have been indicated by a different Hebrew construction called the *waw consecutive*, where *waw* is followed by a verb [the *waw consecutive* is in fact used before the different days of creation. Thus the Hebrew grammar shows that a better translation of Genesis 1:2 would be, 'Now the earth ...', and it could be paraphrased, 'Now as far as the earth was concerned ...'.¹⁰

It is as if the author of Genesis (under God's direction), by the use of such a joining word, is going out of his way to stress that there is no break between the two verses.

3. 'Was' [Hebrew *hayetah*] in Genesis 1:2 is translated 'became' by gappists, giving the reading, 'And the earth became [or had become] without form and void.' Gap theorist A.C. Custance devotes nearly 80% of his book *Without Form and Void*, including 13 Appendices, to advocating this translation, especially with the pluperfect, 'had become'.

However, recognized grammarians, lexicographers, and linguists have almost uniformly rejected the translations 'became' and 'had become'.¹¹ It is a basic exegetical fallacy to claim that because *Strong's Concordance* lists 'became' as one of the meanings of *haya*, it is legitimate to translate it this way in the particular context of Genesis 1:2. It is simply grammatically impossible when the verb *haya* is combined with a waw disjunctive — in the rest of the Old Testament, *Waw* + a noun + *haya* (*qal* perfect, 3rd person) is always translated, 'was' or 'came', but *never* 'became'.

4. The Hebrew words *tohu* and *bohu*, translated 'without form' and 'void' in Genesis 1:2, are claimed by gappists to indicate a judgmental destruction rather than something in the process of being built.¹²



But *tohu* occurs several times in the Bible in which it 'is used in a morally neutral state, describing something unfinished, and confused, but not necessarily evil'.¹³ Hebrew scholars and the Church have for centuries taken the view that Genesis 1:2 is not a scene of judgment or an evil state created by the fall of angels, but a description of the original undeveloped state of the universe. The plain and simple meaning of what Moses says is that on the first day there was a mass covered by water, with no dry land involving features (*tohu* = 'unformed'), and no inhabitants yet (*bohu* = 'unfilled').

Some have misused Jer. 4:23 to teach the gap theory, because it uses the phrase *tohu va bohu* to describe the results of a judgment. Leading gap theorists like Arthur Custance used this fact to assert that 'without form and void' must mean 'laid waste by a judgment'. But this is fallacious—there is nothing in the Hebrew words *tohu va bohu* themselves to suggest that. The only reason they refer to being 'laid waste' is due to the context in which the words are found. They simply mean 'unformed and unfilled'. This state can be due either to nothing else having been created, or some created things being removed. The context of Jer. 4 is a prophecy of the Babylonian sacking of Jerusalem, not creation. In fact, Jer. 4:23 is known as a literary allusion to Genesis 1:2—the judgment would be so severe that it would leave the final state as empty as the world before God created anything. Jer. 4:23 cannot be used to interpret Gen. 1:2 as a judgment—that would be completely back-to-front, because an allusion works only one way.

An analogy: when I open my word processor, my document screen is blank. But if I delete an entire document the screen would likewise be blank. So 'blank' means 'free from any text'. In some contexts, the lack of text is because I haven't written anything, in others it is due to a deletion of text. You would need to know the context to tell which—you couldn't tell from the word 'blank' itself. However, a Custance-type analysis of the word might conclude, "blank" can refer to a screen with all the text deleted, so the word "blank" itself signifies a text deletion event, even when none is stated.'

5. The English word 'replenish' in the KJV translation of Genesis 1:28 ('... and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth'), does not support the gap theory as gappists claim. Linguist Dr Charles Taylor writes, 'As translated in 1611, it ["replenish"] was merely a parallel to "fill", and the prefix "re-" didn't mean "again", but "completely"'.¹⁴ The same Hebrew word *male* is used in Genesis 1:22, and is there translated 'fill [the seas]', so there was no need to translate it differently in verse 28.

6. The darkness. Since 'God is light' (1 John 1:5), and in the Bible 'darkness' is sometimes used as a metaphor for judgment of the wicked (Exodus 10:21, Isaiah 13:10, Joel 2:31, Matthew 27:45, etc.), some (but not all) gappists have argued that Genesis 1:2 refers to an evil state. This is an error of logic. 'The symbol has been confused with the thing symbolized, until the very symbol itself is now considered evil!' [15]

The Earth could not have been anything but dark, because light had not yet been created. Indeed, Genesis 1:3, 'And God said, Let there be light', should alone be sufficient to undermine the gap theory. If the sun, moon and stars were all created (as even the newer gap theories insist) 'in the beginning' (Genesis 1:1), why was it necessary for God to create light (verse 3) after the alleged gap between verses 1 and 2?

OTHER PROBLEMS

1. Very many animal fossils are virtually identical in features to animals living today. Traditional gappists are faced with the problem of how and why this should be so, without there being any direct line of descent.
2. Gappists overlook the words of Jesus in Mark 10:6, 'But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.' The Lord Himself obviously did not envisage any significant gap



between Genesis 1:1 and the creation of Adam and Eve.

3. In any case there is much excellent scientific evidence consistent with a young Earth.¹⁶
4. The whole concept of the need for a gap shows ‘wrong-way-round’ thinking. It is the outcome of using humanistic evolutionary scientific opinions to interpret the Bible, rather than vice versa.

WHERE DO THE ANGELS FIT IN?

Exodus 20:11 says that God made all things in heaven and Earth in six days. This must therefore have included the angels, all originally created good or holy (Colossians 1:16, Jude 6).

Job 38:4, 7 suggests that the angels (‘sons of God’) were present when God laid the foundations of the Earth, i.e. created it on Day One (Genesis 1:1), before He created light. Angels, being spirit beings, don’t have eyes with human retinas, and so presumably can see in the dark even as God can.

This raises the question as to when these beings rebelled to give rise to Satan and his demonic followers (2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6). This was surely not possible before God pronounced everything as being ‘very good’ near the end of Day Six (Genesis 1:31). Some gappists say that there was not enough time after Day Six and before the events of Genesis 3 to allow for this rebellion. So how long was it?

We do not know how long it was after Day Six (or Seven?) that the temptation of Eve occurred (Genesis 3). We can suppose that it must have been before Eve became able to conceive (Genesis 4:1), as Cain had a sinful nature, so must have been conceived after the Fall of his parents.

Let us therefore suppose that there was only a week between Day Six and the (human) Fall. Is this enough time? Consider:

1. Angels inhabit a spiritual realm/dimension and we do not know how this interacts with our own space/mass/time continuum. Ever since Einstein, we know that time is not a constant and is affected, for example, by gravity, so time (if it exists as such) in the spiritual dimension is not necessarily the same as time in the dimensions we know.
2. Even if the above did not apply, one week would seem to be more than enough time. Those who say, ‘It wouldn’t have been enough,’ and so opt for a gap before Genesis 1:2, are applying human standards of reasoning. However, surely angels, with super-human intelligence (but not omniscience), cannot be limited by such anthropomorphic restraints?
3. Even if we use human beings as examples, why is not one day, or even one hour sufficient to assess a situation, and for pride to well up as a result? Why would it take a long time to incite others to join the rebellion? A few hours, or even a day or two, of rabble-rousing has often been sufficient to transform ordinary citizens into a lynch mob—cf. the Jerusalem crowd at the trial of Jesus. God’s subsequent expulsion of the angels who thus sinned from His presence could also easily have occurred within a very short time afterwards—maybe even minutes or less.

We conclude therefore that the time needed for the rebellion of the angels does not require there to be a ‘gap’ in Genesis 1 between verse 1 and 2, and such a notion conflicts with everything being described by God as ‘very good’ at the end of Day Six.

CONCLUSION

Although the gap theory is well meant by its propagators, it is not confirmed by any data, whether linguistic, Biblical, theological, or practical. To advocate death before Adam sinned is contrary to the Biblical statements that death came as a result of Adam’s sin, which occasioned the necessity for man’s



redemption through Christ's death on the cross and His resurrection.

REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES

1. Proposed by Thomas Chalmers (1780–1847), founder of the Free Church of Scotland, the idea of a gap was 'canonized' for some Christians when C.I. Scofield included it in the footnotes of the *Scofield Reference Bible* in 1909.
2. The most academic presentation of the gap theory is to be found in *Without Form and Void* by Arthur C. Custance, Doorway Publications, Brookfield, Canada, 1970.
3. The two Bible passages that are usually invoked about the 'fall' of Satan are Isaiah 14:12–15 and Ezekiel 28:13–17. Both of these passages are in the context of prophecies about earthly kings (of Babylon and Tyre), and no explicit reference is made to Satan. However, even if these verses are so taken, there is no indication that any of the events described took place before Genesis 1:2.
4. Davis A. Young, *Christianity and the Age of the Earth*, Zondervan, Michigan, p. 25, 1982.
5. In other words, if Isaiah 14:12–15 and Ezekiel 28:13–17 do refer to the 'fall' of Satan (which certainly is not proven), this more consistently fits after Day Six of Creation Week, and not between verses 1 and 2 of Genesis 1. For further discussion, see my article, Who was the serpent?, *Creation* **13**(4):36–38.
6. For further discussion see Weston W. Fields, *Unformed and Unfilled*, Burgener Enterprises, Collinsville, Illinois, p. 58, 1976.
7. In the Bible, spiritual death has the meaning of separation from God rather than of annihilation.
8. F. Brown, S.R. Driver, and C.A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Oxford, pp. 251–255, 1968, cited from Ref. 6, p. 81.
9. Kautzsch and Cowley, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, p. 484, section 154a, footnote 1, cited from Ref. 6, p. 82.
10. For a more detailed explanation, see Ref. 6, pp. 81–86.
11. For a more detailed explanation see Ref. 6, pp. 87–112.
12. Ref. 2, p. 168.
13. Ref. 6, p. 129, which summarizes Fields' arguments on pp. 113–130. Gappists sometimes claim that the two words are only used together (*tohu wa bohu*) in other parts of the Bible where judgment is in view; however, there is nothing in the context of Genesis, (which there is in these other references) which would independently suggest judgment.
14. Charles Taylor, *The First 100 Words*, The Good Book Co., Gosford, New South Wales, Australia, p. 74, 1996.
15. Ref. 6, p. 132.
16. See John D. Morris, *The Young Earth*, Master Books, Colorado Springs, 1994; as well as Dr Russell Humphreys' summary, Evidence for a young world, *Creation* **13**(3):28–31, also available as a reprint from the UK, USA, NZ and Australian bookstores.

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What's wrong with 'progressive creation'?

By Ken Ham

The 'progressive creation' view of Dr Hugh Ross on how to interpret the book of Genesis has received wide publicity and endorsement from many well-known Christian leaders, churches, seminaries, and Christian colleges.

This brief summary of only some of these teachings is meant to familiarize Christians with aspects of the 'Rossist' position, including some that are not so well-known. We need to judge these against the absolutes of God's Word to see *'whether these things were so'* (Acts 17:11).

While Dr Ross is NOT an evolutionist per se, he does accept much of what evolutionists teach in astronomy and geology. We do not seek to pass judgment on his Christian character or commitment to the Lord.

In summary, progressive creation/Rossism teaches:

- The 'Big Bang' origin of the universe occurred 16-billion-years ago; death, bloodshed, and disease existed before Adam & Eve
- The days of Creation were long periods
- Noah's Flood was a local event
- Sin has only a regionally limited effect on the world
- Man-like creatures that behaved much like us—and painted on cave walls—existed before Adam and Eve, but didn't have a spirit and thus had no salvation
- The record of nature is just as perfect as the Word of God
- Over millions of years, God created new species as others kept going extinct.

Publisher: Dr Ross's books are published by NAVPRESS, the publishing arm of the Navigators. They stated in a press release: 'We consider it our privilege and our calling to stand behind Hugh Ross with our support as his publisher.'

PROGRESSIVE CREATION/ROSSISM TEACHINGS

The following quotes are all taken from lectures or publications by Dr. Ross:

1. Concerning the creation of life in the universe: *'It only works in a cosmos of a hundred-billion trillion stars that's precisely sixteen-billion-years old. This is the narrow window of time in which life is possible.'*

'Therefore it allows me to make an interesting paraphrase of John 3:16, if you'll permit—For God so loved the human race that he went to the expense of building a hundred-billion trillion-stars and carefully shaped and crafted them for sixteen-billion years so that at this brief moment in time we could all have a nice place to live.' (Dallas Theological Seminary Chapel Service,

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September 13, 1996).

Comment: Read John 3:16 for yourself and compare it to the above!

Also: *'Life is only possible when the universe is between 12 and 17 billion years.'* (Toocoa Falls Christian College, Staley Lecture Series, March 1997)

Comment: God is omnipotent—He could make a fully functional universe ready for life right from the beginning, for with God nothing is impossible (See Matt. 19:26; Mark 10:27; Luke 7:1).

2. Dr Ross defending his belief that Noah's Flood was only local: *'But here are some reasons why, physical reasons why, the flood cannot be global. Number one is the limited extent of sin. Given that human beings had not yet civilized and inhabited Antarctica, there'd be no need for God to flood Antarctica because there'd be no sin there in Antarctica.'*

'There'd be no need for God to kill off all the penguins because those penguins had no contact with reprobate humanity. And in that case, I don't think Noah took any penguins on board the ark. ... Only bird and mammal species, according to the Levitical Law, can be impacted by sin.' (Toocoa Falls Christian College, Staley Lecture Series, March, 1997)

Comment: Read Genesis 6: 19-20; The Bible clearly states here that *all* kinds of land animals - including penguins—were on the Ark. By the way, most penguins live in other parts of the world, including the Galapagos Islands near the Equator!

3. Dr Ross defining what he calls the 'sixty-seventh book of the Bible': *'Not everyone has been exposed to the sixty-six books of the Bible, but everyone on planet Earth has been exposed to the sixty-seventh book—the book that God has written upon the heavens for everyone to read.'*

And the Bible tells us it's impossible for God to lie, so the record of nature must be just as perfect, and reliable and truthful as the sixty-six books of the Bible that is part of the Word of God... And so when astronomers tell us.' [Ross uses the example of scientists attempting to measure distances in space and goes on to say that] *'it's part of the truth that God has revealed to us. It actually encompasses part of the Word of God.'* (Toocoa Falls Christian College, Staley Lecture Series March, 1997).

Comment: Indeed God cannot lie, so when He tells us in Romans 8:22 that *'the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain'* because of sin, then how can sinful fallible human beings in a sin-cursed universe say that their interpretation of the evidence is as perfect as God's written revelation? Scientific assertions must use **fallible** assumptions and **fallen** reasoning—how can this be the Word of God?

4. Dr Ross's Creation story for children states: *'Starting about 2 to 4 million years ago, God began creating man-like mammals or "hominids." These creatures stood on two feet, had large brains, and used tools. Some even buried their dead and painted on cave walls.'*

'However, they were different from us. They did not worship God or establish religious practices. In time, all these man-like creatures went extinct. Then, about 10 to 25 thousand years ago, God replaced them with Adam and Eve.' (Reasons To Believe Web Site, updated July 8, 1997)

Comment: Dr Ross accepts and defends the evolutionist radiometric dating methods, so all evidence of humans, descendants of Noah, if given evolutionary dates of more than 25,000 years (eg., the Neanderthal cave sites) must be redefined as related to spirit-less 'hominoids' which the Bible doesn't mention. However, the same methods have been used to 'date' the Australian aborigines back at least 40,000 years (some have claimed much older). By Ross's reasoning, the Australian aborigines could NOT be descendants of Adam and Eve. However, read Acts 17:26. Interestingly, some scientists now date the American Indians' ancestors at earlier than 40,000 years.

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5. Dr Ross commenting on God's knowledge and wisdom: *'The Creator of the universe must be a Being that's a minimum of a hundred-trillion times better educated, more intelligent, therefore more powerful, more creative, and even more caring and loving than we human beings.'* (Focus on the Family, radio broadcast, August 7, 1997)

Comment: Our Creator is NOT a minimum of a hundred-trillion times better educated! He is INFINITELY more knowledgeable (See Col. 2:3; Job 21:22, 42:1).

6. Dr Ross defending death, bloodshed, disease, and suffering before Adam's sin: *'The spilling of blood before Adam's sin in no way affects or detracts from the doctrine of atonement. Upholding that central doctrine in no way demands a Creation scenario in which none of God's creatures received a scratch or other blood-letting wound before Adam and Eve sinned... Even in an ideal natural environment animals would be constantly scratched, pricked, bruised, and even killed by accidental events and each other... Could it be that God's purposes are somehow fulfilled through our experiencing the 'random, wasteful, inefficiencies' of the natural realm He created?'* (Creation and Time, Chapters 6 & 8)

Comment: Read Genesis 1:29,30; Genesis 9:3; Genesis 1:31; Genesis 2:17; Genesis 3: 17-19; Genesis 3:21; Hebrews 9:22; Romans 5; Romans 8: 20-22; 1 Corinthians 15; Acts 3:21; Isaiah 11:6-9; Revelation 21:4; Revelation 22:3.

God created a perfect world at the beginning—all the animals and man were vegetarians (Gen. 1:29). Plants were given for food—they do not have a *nephesh* [life spirit] as man and animals do.

God killed the first animal in the Garden and shed blood because of sin—if there was death, bloodshed, disease and suffering before sin, then the basis for the atonement is *destroyed*. Christ suffered death, for death was the penalty for sin. There will be no death or suffering in the perfect 'restoration'—so why can't we accept the same in a perfect ('very good') Creation before sin?

7. Dr Ross on Revelation: *'We're also told in Revelation 6:9 that Christians who died ahead of us are watching what we're doing. It's like they go to heaven and they're given the equivalent of some kind of TV monitor with a bunch of channels that they can select and they can watch.'* (Focus on the Family, broadcast August 8, 1997)

Comment: Look up the verse yourself in Revelation!


8. Dr Ross on space-time dimensions: *'What follows, then, from string theory and from all these recent findings in particle physics and astrophysics is that God must be operating in a minimum of eleven dimensions of space and time, or their practical equivalent.'* (Beyond The Cosmos, Chapter 8)

Comment: Dr Ross bases much of what he says on 'string theory,' which is NOT universally accepted, and is just one of many arcane speculations being discussed by theorists. It is so vague and speculative, and without experimental support, that to use it to apply to defining attributes of God is foolish.

In the same book Dr Ross declares: *'We are the only people ever to see (or need) direct scientific proof not only for God's existence, but also for His transcendent capacity to create space and time dimensions, as well as to operate in dimensions independent of our own four.'* (Beyond The Cosmos, chapter 3)

Comment: What about Hebrews 11:3,6? Whatever happened to faith? String theory is NOT proof for God's existence. Remember Romans 10:17: **'faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.'** The Spirit of God uses the Word of God to bring people to Christ.





Ten major differences and similarities between Calendar-Day and Day-Age Creationists According to Dr Hugh Ross

comments by Jonathan Sarfati

This article comments on a brochure (also posted on his website) recently sent out by Dr Hugh Ross of *Reasons to Believe*, giving his own perspective on the differences between ‘young-earth’ or ‘calendar-day’ creationists like *AiG*, and ‘old-Earth’ or ‘day-age’ creationists like himself. Since it’s his own perspective, he cannot accuse us of putting words in his mouth. However, as shown, there are many of the same misrepresentations as in his other works.

cdc = Calendar-Day Creationists (i.e. accept that the days of Genesis 1 were ordinary days, for example *Answers in Genesis* and *Institute for Creation Research*)

dac = Day-Age Creationists (like Hugh Ross and many other ‘Progressive creationists’)

Dr Ross’s comments are in *italics* and indented, i.e. the lines headed by **cdc** are what Ross **claims** we believe, not necessarily what we **actually** believe.

TEN MAJOR DIFFERENCES

1. **cdc**: *Natural biological evolution works, producing new species and genera within orders and families.*


This is misleading, since we would not call it ‘biological evolution’ because *no new* information is produced. However, that new species arise is indisputable—Ross seems not to understand that producing a new reproductively isolated population is by definition a new species. Also, there is no Biblical or scientific reason why the created kinds cannot sometimes have enough built-in genetic variation so they can give rise to varieties within the genus or family (a man-made classification after all).

1. **dac**: *Natural biological evolution fails at all levels except for those species numbering more than about one quadrillion individuals with generation times less than three months and body sizes smaller than one centimeter.*

This is an amazing statement—one wonders what this astronomer’s source of such biological nonsense could be. This fixity of species view goes well beyond the Biblical text and is disproved by *operational* science.

2. **cdc**: *Laws of physics were radically different before Adam’s sin.*
2. **dac**: *Laws of physics were identical before and after Adam’s sin.*

One wonders what difference Ross thinks the Fall made. However, with the exception that God withdrew some of His sustaining power, we believe that the laws of gravity, thermodynamics, electromagnetism, etc. were operative from creation. I’m on record denying that the second law of thermodynamics began at the Fall.

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3. **cdc:** Redeemed humanity will be restored to paradise.
 3. **dac:** Redeemed humanity will be delivered from paradise to a brand new creation.

This is misleading. We are on record as affirming that there will be ‘a new heaven and a new Earth’ (Revelation 21:1), and even now, believers in Christ are new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17). We also affirm that the new creation will be even grander than the original paradise, because there will no longer be even the possibility of sin. However, we point out that many references to the Consummation parallel the pre-Fall world, so this is meant to be a hint of what the the Consummation will be like, e.g. vegetarian lions and wolves (Isaiah 11:6–9, 65:25), light without the sun like the first three days of Creation (Revelation 22:5) and a Tree of Life (Genesis 2:9, 3:22,24 cf. Revelation 2:7, 22:2,14,19).

A more accurate way of expressing our difference is that Ross *denies* a pre-Fall deathless paradise altogether! This is shown by his last point of difference below.

4. **cdc:** Genesis 1 is the account of physical creation. ...

Of course. It’s not only *AiG* that believes this, but God Himself spoke the Fourth Commandment, giving the reason that He created in six days and rested on the seventh (Exodus 20:8–11).

4. **dac:** It is critical to carefully integrate all ten of the major creation accounts in the Bible.

What is Ross talking about? The Bible never contradicts itself, and there is nothing to naysay the plain teaching of Genesis 1 and Exodus 20:8–11 elsewhere in the Bible.

5. **cdc:** The universe and the stars are eternal.
5. **dac:** The universe and the stars are temporal.

Where do we say that the universe or stars are eternal? This statement is without foundation and is highly misleading.

6. **cdc:** Astronomers are deceiving the public.
6. **dac:** Astronomers are telling us the truth.

Which astronomers? Dr Danny Faulkner, who believes in **cdc**? And we normally point out that secular astronomers are not necessarily consciously deceiving the public, but are looking at the same data as us, only through the wrong ‘glasses’. Our position is well stated in *Creation: ‘Where’s the proof?’* [Page 36 of *Why Does it Matter?*] for the creation/evolution controversy in general, and in *The Earth: how old does it look?* [Page 3 of *How Old is the Earth?*] for age issues in particular.

7. **cdc:** The heavens merely reveal the existence of God.
7. **dac:** The heavens also reveal God’s transcendent qualities and many of His personal attributes.

It’s hard to know what Ross is thinking here. We often quote Romans 1:20. However, what we deny is that creation reveals enough for salvation, and we also deny that the interpretations by fallible humans of the creation should override the propositional revelation of Scripture.

8. **cdc:** There is only one literal interpretation of Genesis 1.
8. **cdc:** There are several literal interpretations of Genesis 1.

Only if there are several literal interpretations of the word ‘literal’! The literal meaning of ‘literal’ is: ‘Taking words in their usual or primary sense and applying the ordinary rules of grammar, without mysticism, allegory or metaphor.’ The usual and primary meaning of ‘day’ is a single period of Earth’s rotation, and this is unambiguous when accompanied by a number, evening, and/or morning.

9. **cdc:** Genesis 1 cannot be reconciled with the established record of nature.

9. ***dac***: *Genesis 1 can be reconciled with the established record of nature.*

Rather, we would say: 'Genesis 1 cannot be reconciled with the uniformitarian *interpretation* of nature.'

10. ***cdc***: *The pre-Adamic death of the higher animals contradicts the character of God and the doctrine of blood atonement for human sin. The Bible does not attribute the properties of life and death to the plants and lower animals. ...*

Our claim is that plants are never called *nephesh hayyah* (transliteration of the Hebrew in Genesis), meaning that their life and death is qualitatively different. This is shown by the vegetarianism of both humans and animals in both the pre-Fall world (Genesis 1:29–30) and in the Restored state (Isaiah 11:6–9, 65:25).

10. ***dac***: *The pre-Adamic death of higher animals is consistent with a loving, merciful Creator ...*

Tell that to the animals with their flesh torn apart and ravaged with disease, i.e. that it's still a 'very good' creation, rather than a sin-cursed world.

... and in no way impinges upon the doctrine of blood atonement for human sin. The Bible does attribute the properties of life and death to both the plants and the lower animals.

Wrong, as above. See *The god of an old Earth* [p. 10], which shows that any billions-of-years compromise entails that death and suffering were always part of God's creation, and how this is inconsistent with the Bible.

TEN MAJOR SIMILARITIES

I would agree with all 10, however I doubt that we understand them the same way as Ross.

1. *The Bible must be taken literally unless the context indicates otherwise.*

Agree with the sentiment. I prefer to say 'plainly', which incorporates a literal interpretation of a literal context, poetic interpretation of poetic context. Ross would probably have no objection to that, and 'literal' is an acceptable way of saying this, but using 'plainly' should hopefully avoid caricatures by theistic evolutionists. The problem is that Ross has a strange understanding of the word 'literal' as shown above.

2. *The Bible is inerrant in all disciplines of scholarship.*

Definitely. However, while I have no doubt that Ross publicly and sincerely defends the Bible against any error, in practice Ross imposes secular 'disciplines of scholarship' over the Bible. The main differences are much the same as one key issue of the Reformation—*Sola Scriptura* = Scripture alone. That is, the *supreme authority, perspicuity and sufficiency* of Scripture. But Ross claims: 'God's revelation is not limited exclusively to God's words. The facts of nature may be likened to a sixty-seventh book of the Bible' (*Creation and Time*, p. 56). These words alone show that Ross in effect teaches *Scriptura et scientia* = Scripture and science. In practice, Ross reinterprets Scripture in an unnatural way to fit in with the alleged 'facts of nature' (really uniformitarian interpretations of nature), which is *Scriptura sub scientia* = Scripture below science.

3. *The universe was both transcendentally and supernaturally created.*

Yes. Alas, Ross believes that God used the alleged big bang, an essentially atheistic notion by which most of its proponents assert the universe created itself.

4. *Naturalism cannot explain the origin of life.*

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Yes.

5. Naturalism cannot entirely explain the history of life, nor can theistic evolution.

No dispute there.

6. Naturalism cannot entirely explain the geophysical history of the earth.

However, Ross concedes much ground to naturalism, because he fails to allow for the devastating global Flood of Noah's day, responsible for many of the rock layers and fossils.

7. Naturalism cannot explain entirely the astrophysical history of the universe and solar system.

True, but Ross again gives a lot of ground to naturalism, essentially agreeing with the naturalistic 'big bang' and history of stellar evolution over billions of years.

8. Genesis 1 is both factual and chronological in its context. It describes God's 'very good' creation in the space of six days.

Agree with the words, but as shown above, Ross doesn't think that they mean what they say! Ross's creation, pre-Fall is anything but 'very good'. It has the horrors of death, struggle, suffering, disease and carnivory that we see in today's world.

9. Adam and Eve were a literal couple created by God just thousands of years ago.

Yes, we agree that Adam was created out of dust, and Eve from Adam, with no animal ancestry. But by 'just thousands', *AiG* means six thousand, as per a straightforward reading of the chronologies of Genesis 5 and 11; Ross believes it was many times as long ago, which entails inserting huge gaps in the chronologies of which there is not the slightest Biblical evidence.

10. All human beings owe their descent to Adam and Eve.

Agree, but we would regard those specimens classified as Neandertals and *Homo erectus* in that category, while Ross regards them as soulless hominids.

CONCLUSION

Once again, Ross has made misleading accusations against organizations like *AiG* in an attempt to justify his own compromise position. However, we have shown in many places, he has frequently misrepresented what we believe, and that his arguments do not hold up against Scripture. It is important not to be sidetracked by Ross's appeal to 'scientific consensus', but always to stand on the authoritative Word of God, i.e. letting it teach us, rather than imposing outside ideas upon the text.

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The horse and the tractor *Why God and evolution don't mix*

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Once upon a time, a salesman met a farmer, contentedly using a horse-drawn plough. The salesman, referring to the just-invented diesel tractor, said, 'I'm here to tell you about a machine that will knock your socks off.'

After learning how the tractor worked, the farmer remarked, 'So, the tractor is a new means by which the horse pulls the plough, right?'

'Not at all,' said the salesman. 'The tractor does not work with the horse. The tractor replaces the horse.' The salesman then explained to the farmer how the tractor is self-propelling and simply does not require a horse.

'I see now,' mused the farmer. 'Still, I can combine the horse and the tractor by placing the tractor in neutral, and then letting the horse pull it and the plough as well.'

'Wait a minute,' said the salesman. 'That doesn't make sense. Why have the horse pull the tractor and the plough? If you're going to use the tractor, let it run on its own power. If you want to use the horse, however, let it plough by itself. Don't make the poor animal pull a heavy machine for no reason.'

'In that case,' replied the farmer, 'I'll drive the tractor, and just use the horse for recreation. But whenever I drive my tractor, I will tell everyone that my horse is really pulling it.'

Shaking his head in bewilderment, the salesman replied, 'You can say whatever you want that makes you comfortable. But remember, the tractor is self-propelled. The horse has nothing to do with it.'

'Oh, but now you're wrong,' said the farmer, with conviction. 'Just because we can't see the horse anywhere around the tractor doesn't mean that the horse isn't there anyway, pulling invisibly.'

The salesman sighed and put on his coat. 'Yeah, right,' he muttered, heading for the door. 'I can't get through to you. The horse has only an imaginary presence in the propulsion and operation of the tractor. In fact, sir, there is absolutely no difference, other than your saying so, between a tractor running by itself and a tractor being pulled by an invisible horse.' And off he went to look for other customers.

The moral: the folly of combining a horse and a tractor is equivalent to combining God and evolution in so-called theistic evolution. A naturalistic, evolutionary explanation (for the origin of life, for instance, or the origin of the first animals) doesn't need God acting to move things along.¹ God, like the horse, is quite irrelevant. If the tractor is working properly, the horse can wander in the pasture.

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Likewise, imagining God ‘working through’ naturalistic evolution is as nonsensical as having a horse pull a tractor in neutral. If naturalistic evolution is a truly sufficient explanation, it will run on its own power—that is, account for what we observe solely in terms of natural forces and entities. We may envisage other roles for God (if we still see a need for Him), but creating living things isn’t among them.

On the other hand, if evolution isn’t sufficient (if the tractor doesn’t work) then why hitch God to the explanation? Why encumber God the Creator by asking Him to ‘pull’ a false, not to mention cruel and wasteful, evolutionary process?

Oddest of all, however, is retaining a nominal or strictly rhetorical role for God in a process that has no need of Him. The farmer who claims that, despite all appearances, the tractor runs because his horse is invisibly pulling it, isn’t going to win the confidence of his neighbours. Instead, they will probably pity him for his self-delusion.

‘Theistic’ and naturalistic evolution are functionally identical. The only distinction is the empty theological language attached in the former case—making no more difference than an invisible horse to a tractor.

This article has appeared in the *Bible-Science Newsletter* and the author’s website—used here with permission.

NOTE

1. Ed. note: that is, in fact, the whole reason why it was constructed in the first place.

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